Chapter 90

The Man Called a Grim Reaper

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Why is this world split

into 'people who are loved' and 'people that aren't loved'?

Who split it up?

— Where did the paths diverge?

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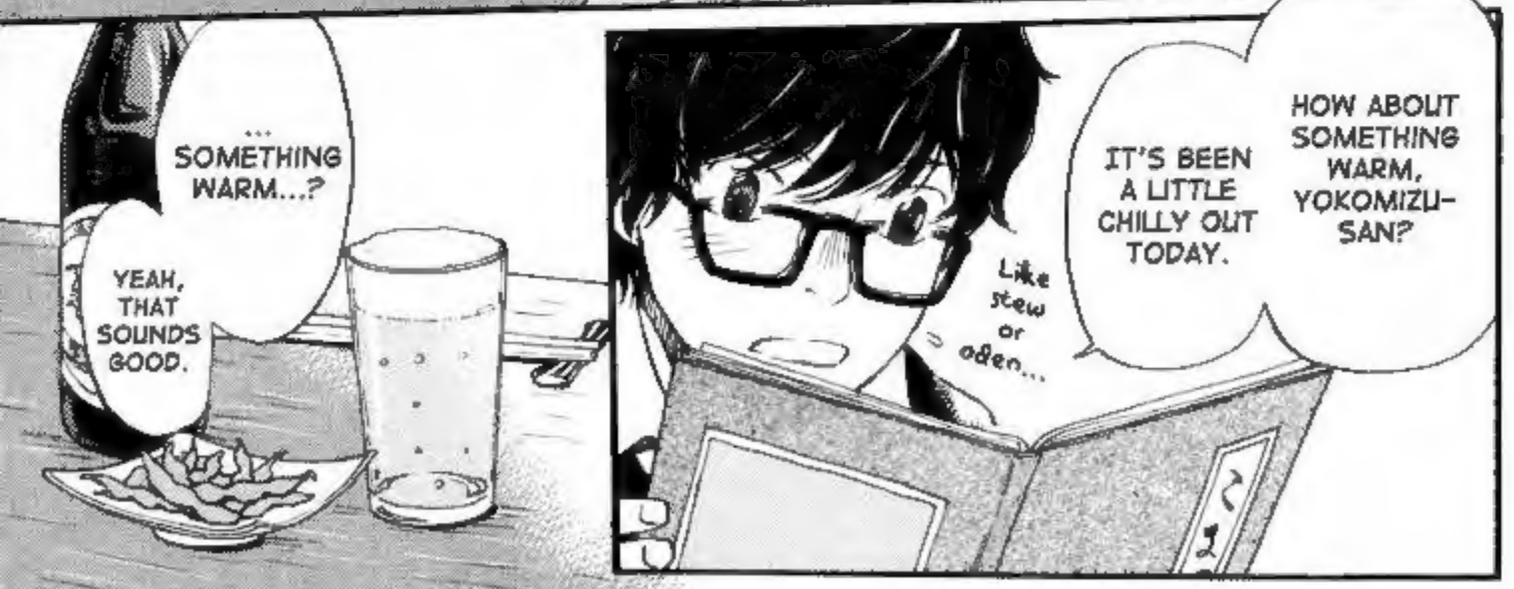
YOU TWO
REALLY SAVED ME TODAY...
SORRY. ORDER WHATEVER YOU WANT.
MAN, IT'S FINE.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
EXCUSE MEEE! COULD YOU TAKE OUR ORDER?
Coming right uuup!
Yokomizu-san, what do you want to drink?

SORRY ...
I JUST CAN'T GET BACK INTO THE SWING OF THINGS.


HOW ABOUT SOMETHING WARM, YOKOMIZU-SAN?
IT'S BEEN A LITTLE CHILLY OUT TODAY.
Like stew or oden...
... SOMETHING WARM...?
YEAH, THAT SOUNDS GOOD.

BUT, MAN...
WHAT WAS WITH THAT GREETING THE PRESIDENT GAVE THIS AFTERNOON?
SERIOUSLY?
Today was day 2 of the first game of the Meijin Championship.
Yokomizu-san and Smith-san were doing the big board commentary
and I was called in as an assistant.
70th Period
Meijin Championship
Game
OKAY, SO LET ME INTRODUCE YOUR COMMENTATORS FOR TODAY!!
STARTING FROM THE RIGHT, WE HAVE
CLASS-DOWN!
STAG-NATING!
AAAND
CLASS-UP!
THE TRIO OF CLASS B, GROUP 2!
Uh, hey, President!!
ばーん
ザワ.ザワッ...

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SFX: BAAAN HYOOOOO ZAWAH ZAWAH ZAWAAHH (TALKING)

SFX: GUH DONN ZUIHH SARA SARA SARA (RUSTLING SAND)
Could we please have a chair?!!
Excuse meee!! A chair!!
I'M THE ONE 'STAGNATING' IN CLASS B GROUP 2, SMITH!!
UH, I WAS JUST PERSONALLY INTRODUCED BY THE PRESIDENT,
WELL, MY PRESENCE IS NEEDED ELSEWHERE. GOOD LUCK WITH THE REST, FELLAS! ☆
I WAS PRETTY DEPRESSED ABOUT GOING DOWN IN RANK ALREADY.
THEN THAT INTRODUCTION TURNED MY HEART TO SAND...
AND ON TOP OF THAT
HE CAME TODAY, DIDN'T HE...?
YEAH,
HE DID, ALL RIGHT ...
ALL THE WAY BACK OF THE BIG BOARD MENU.

— The most shunned person in the shogi world.

'Him standing there is unlucky,' 'If he sits, it's creepy,' 'The sight of him walking is the the god of plague.'

A man that always seems to be clad in clothing of pitch-black omens.

Namerikawa Izaya 7-dan, age 35.

Yes, last month, Yokomizu-san was up against this man, Namerikawa Izaya 7-dan, in the last rank-deciding match of Class B, Group 1.

At that precipice of 'If you win, you stay where you are. If you lose, you fall in rank.'...

UHH...

IS IT OKAY IF I GO TO THE BATHROOM BEFORE THE POST MORTEM?

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— he fell.
EXCUSE ME.
I'VE BEEN HOLDING IT IN FOR QUITE SOME TIME.
.....
GO AHEAD.
Like he had been reeled in by the Grim Reaper.

'So now both of them are going down a rank, huh...?'
'He did a great job taking Yokomizu with him.'
'I guess he wasn't about to fall all alone...'
— 'That's the god of plague all right.'
Hm
— And
that way of losing has a lingering effect...
Hm
Not being alooone
is such a wonderful thiiing!

banda

'Yokomizu is probably gonna get shredded next period...'

I KNOW HOW PATHETIC IT SOUNDS,

BUT JUST SEEING HIM STANDING THERE BY THE BEAM MADE ME SHIVER.

IT MADE ME REMEMBER THAT LAST GAME.

AND I'VE HONESTLY BEEN FEELING AWFUL EVER SINCE THEN...

THAT GUY, WHENEVER I WOULD LOOK UP DURING THE GAME,

HE'D BE STARING AT MY FACE.

AGAIN AND AGAIN, JUST STARING.

I JUST

SERIOUSLY, SERIOUSLY, DO NOT LIKE THAT...

IT CAME TO THE POINT WHERE THAT WAS ALL I WAS THINKING ABOUT

AND I JUST WANTED TO SCREAM.....

I GET YOU.
I FELT THE SAME WAY WHEN I PLAYED HIM...
that I'd become so muddled, I was left with a board that was beyond all hope of recovery...
—And it was around then

but he twisted around me and held me back with incredible persistence.
For him, it was a throwaway match,
It was 4 years ago. B-1 was finally within my grasp and my final game was against Namerikawa.

I see... So it's been 4 years since then, huh...?
THAT'S RIGHT, YOU WENT UP AGAINST NAMERIKAWA, TOO!
SMITH?
Smith-san?
And back then, he was staring at me like he was licking me all over...
Hu Hu Hu Hu Hu Hu Hu
So I've been stagnating.
—It's been 4 years since then.

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he plays a power game like a man possessed by a god.
But for some reason when he's playing a game where his opponent's fate is on the line,
Normally, he plays this soft and light hard-to-get-a-hold-on sort of shogi.

and takes them in the opposite direction of their 'desires.'
For some reason, he's always standing in the crossroads that is somebody's 'moment of truth'
How can a guy be that ominous ?!
He does too damn good a job at being a god of plague!!

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We're talking about humans right now!!
Shut your trap, divine child!!
QUIET DOWN, VIRGIN !!
Ya think you're so great just cause you debuted in middle school
Just eat your tsukune!!
I I'll just eat up them!
At least let us complain!!
*The ogre uppercut
BUT, UM .
MY DAD TAUGHT ME THAT NO MATTER WHO YOU'RE UP AGAINST IN A MATCH,
IT'S GOOD MANNERS TO PLAY YOUR BEST AGAINST THEM
*Ginger ale
SFX BAAAHH KIH

ENTRANCE CEREMONY ?!
THAT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU, DOES IT, KIRIYAMA?
NO, UH,
SOMEBODY I KNOW IS ENTERING THE SCHOOL, SO I'M ACCOMPANYING THEM.
SOMEONE YOU KNOW?
WHAT? GOD-DAMMIT!
IT'S A GIRL, ISN'T IT?!
KIRIYAMAAAA
SEARCH
THIS GUY'S CHARACTER BACKGROUND IS WAY TOO PERFECT!
AND THEY SAY HIS FACE IS TOO SINISTER SO HE WASN'T ABLE TO TAKE OVER THE FAMILY BUSINESS EVEN THOUGH HE'S THE ELDEST BROTHER...
And on top of that, his parent's house is a 'funeral parlor', what?! Is this his thing or something?!
WHAT IS THAT GUY'S DEAL ANYHOW?! THE BLACK SUIT AND THE SLICKED BACK HAIR, JUST HOW MUCH OF A CHARACTER HAS THAT GUY GOT?!
ER♪
UH I'VE UH .
GOT AN ENTRANCE CEREMONY TOMORROW, SO

—And a few days later...

Shogi World

The 70th Meijin Championship

Souya Touya's Challenge

.....

First Long Interview

The Namerikawa shogi player called a Grim Reaper

The Izaya 7-dan man in the funeral attire

'I really love people.'

—My parents run a small funeral parlor in town and ever since I was a grade schooler,

even now from time to time, I go there to help out.

I don't know anything that makes me feel more 'alive' than this.
—That's why I love shogi from the bottom of my heart.
I can't help but get ideas about 'giving it your all when you're still alive and moving...'
Whenever I look at people inside a casket that won't be moving around anymore,
将棋会館
'I cannot help but think lovingly from the bottom of my heart about this opponent I am in a match against, showing me themselves just as are.'
'At that extreme point where nothing can be glossed over,'
'Even more so when someone's fate is hanging in the balance.'
'Because a match is quite close to an exchange of lives'
—During matches, I frequently peer into the faces of my opponents, do you know why?

'As long as I can like them, that is quite enough for me to be happy.'
'Really I'm okay as long as I'm satisfied myself.'
—I'm doing it for myself.'
—That seems like something people could easily misunderstand,
how do you feel about that?
KIYOMIZU-SAAAN,
SMITH-SAN,
.....
SFX: PATAN

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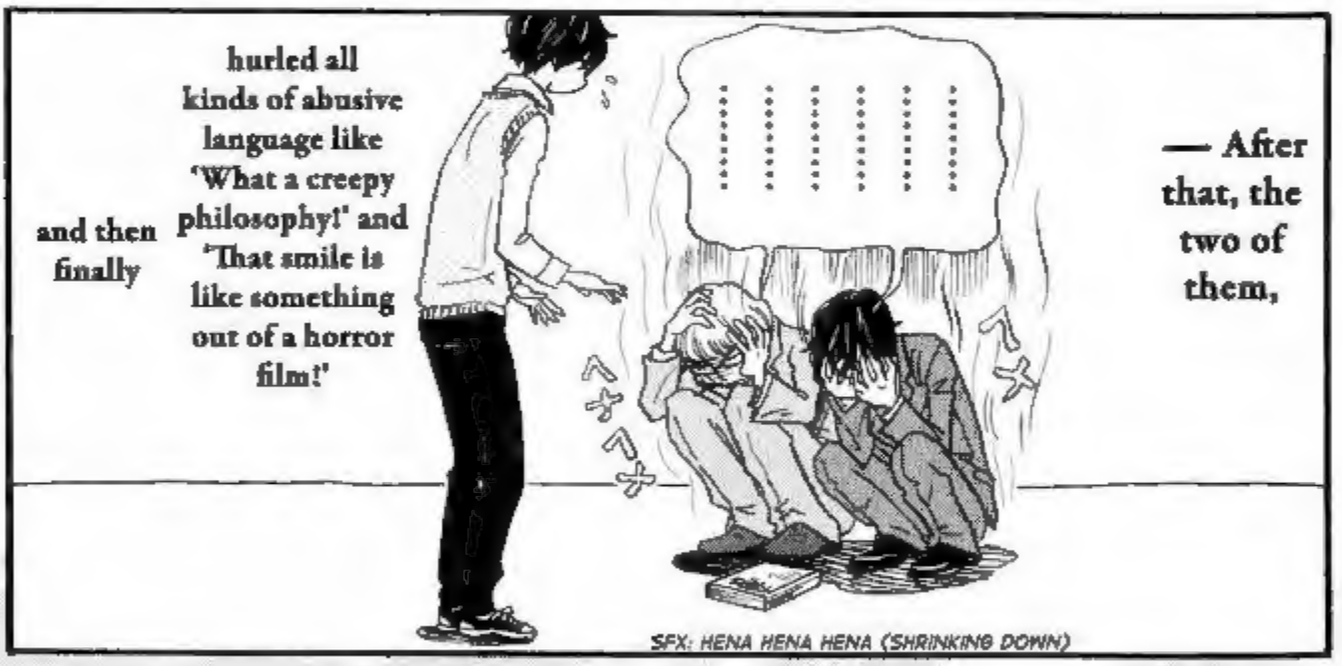
and then finally
hurled all kinds of abusive language like 'What a creepy philosophy!' and 'That smile is like something out of a horror film!'
— After that, the two of them,
SFX: HENA HENA HENA (SHRINKING DOWN)

— they muttered.

Chapter 90 END

3-GATSU NO LION VOLUME 9

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